

The DTV Delay Act, which was recently signed into law, extends the deadline for full-power broadcast TV stations to complete the DTV transition from February 17, 2009 to June 12, 2009. This new law allows more time for consumers to be prepared for the DTV transition. However, under the law, stations may choose to stop broadcasting in analog before the new transition date. By June 12, 2009, over-the-air full-power television broadcasts, which are currently provided by television stations in both analog and digital formats, will become digital only. Digital television (DTV) technology allows a broadcaster to offer a single program stream of high definition television (HDTV), or alternatively, multiple video program streams (multicasts).

Households with over-the-air analog-only televisions will no longer be able to receive full-power television service unless they either: (1) buy a digital-to-analog converter box to hook up to their analog television set; (2) acquire a digital television or an analog television equipped with a digital tuner; or (3) subscribe to cable, satellite, or telephone company television services, which will likely provide for the conversion of digital signals to their analog customers.

A digital-to-analog converter box program, administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the Department of Commerce, that will partially subsidize consumer purchases of converter boxes. NTIA provides up to two forty-dollar coupons to requesting U.S. households. The coupons are being issued between January 1, 2008, and March 31, 2009, and must be used within 90 days after issuance towards the purchase of a stand-alone device used solely for digital-to-analog conversion. If you have not yet applied for your coupons, consider doing so now.

After hooking up a converter box to your TV set, or installing a new digital television, you will need to scan (also known as "auto-tune") for new channels to ensure you receive all of the digital stations broadcasting in your area. While some boxes do this automatically, you may need to select scan manually on your television set. Since some digital stations are transitioning on different dates, you may want to consider rescanning on a periodic basis to ensure that you have access to all available digital programming. Because some digital stations that are already on air are moving to different channel numbers at the end of DTV transition, you may need to rescan again after June 12, 2009 to ensure that you receive all of the digital stations broadcasting in your area.

For more information about the transition to DTV, please visit:

Information for Consumers: <http://www.dtv.gov/> or 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)

Information on the Converter Box Program: <http://www.dtv2009.gov/> or 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

For assistance with installation of your converter box: <http://www.dtv.gov/publications.html> or 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)

For assistance with reception on your television: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html> or 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)

Search by zip code to find any local support groups to assist with installation, call centers, or walk in centers: <https://dtvsupport.fcc.gov/dtvtools/>

Search by address to find out which stations are expected to serve your household: <http://www.dtv.gov/fixreception.html>

Are You Ready? Take the quiz: <http://www.dtvtransition.org/>